

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Congressman-Elect Henry A. Waxman, in a letter today to Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, has sharply criticized the arms sale of sixty American fighter planes to Saudi Arabia.

Citing the danger that the warplanes might be transferred to Egypt, Mr. Waxman wrote, "These weapons will, in all likelihood, be turned against Israel. Saudi assurances as to its use of these weapons aside, it is too easy to see how these warplanes will be employed under the stress of another, more frightening eruption of fighting in the area. The planes will go from Saudi Arabia to Egypt for sorties against Israel. It is also entirely conceivable these planes might be used against the United States."

Congressman-elect Waxman, a freshman Democrat from the Los Angeles area, also chastised the developed nations' pattern of seeking the goodwill of OPEC through arms sales. "These uncoordinated, competitive arms sales, designed only to curry the favor of the oil cartel, can only invite further instability and aggression. We are surpassed only by the French in paying the arms tribute OPEC is exacting from the West," he said.

Mr. Waxman urged a more constructive approach in reaching economic agreements with the oil producing nations. "It would

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be far more beneficial to the people of Saudi Arabia if, instead of contributing to the madness of the arms race in the Middle East, we sought to export food and technology instead of warplanes for the area's development.

"To continue to arm the oil producing nations under the present circumstances is irresponsible, inconsistent with the longterm interests of the United States, and a further measure of our capitulation to the cartel's blackmail," he added.

Congressman-elect Waxman also expressed his dismay that Congress was informed of the arms sale initially through press reports several days after the fact. "If the Secretary of State is to expect a greater measure of consensus over the foreign policy of the United States, he must be more forthcoming with other public officials in the Government," he wrote.

Mr. Waxman concluded by emphasizing the danger to Israel from from the arms sale agreement. "We have only succeeded," he wrote, "in feeding the propensities toward war, and not enhancing the chances for peace. And it is our friends, the Israelis, who once again are the most prominent victims of this activity."

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